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- *From:* DJ Delorie <dj@xxxxxxxxxxx>
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fpga_toys@xxxxxxxx writes:

I still use an older version of PCB (050318) which is fast.

The HID project is done, so you might be interested in trying the latest snapshot (20060422). You can configure it for either Gtk or Lesstif (or openmotif, depending on what you have). The lesstif hid is very streamlined, and a number of our regulars claim it's much faster and easier to use than what they were used to.

The Gtk hid looks much like what you're used to.

FYI: we've gotten the Gtk hid to build on windows, and the lesstif hid builds on Mac OS/X (and solaris, hp/ux, aix, irix, etc).

And I do hand route almost everything, as it's autorouter isn't up to a high end (\$30K) router either.

I've commented that we need a volunteer to replace the gridless router with a topological router. Gridless just can't keep up with today's dense layouts. I'm sure the topological router won't be up to everything either, but it should do a lot better than gridless.

My (hopefully) next "big" project is a global trace "puller" that lets you be sloppy with your layout, and have PCB clean things up for you (straight runs, graceful curves, minimum trace length). We'll see if I ever finish (or even start) it ;-)

I wish the gEDA integration was as good as Kicad at times,

It's a common request, and we're making **some** progress with it. Dan just offered his first pass at a "mode menu" for gschem, which lets you do pcb-specific things right from the gschem menu. PCB also has a

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listener port for remote control. He's working on tying things together in useful ways (like cross-selecting).

I've turned several high density boards with PCB without problem that are double sided smt, small form factor (PC104+) with BGA560 FPGA, multiple TSOP2 SDRAMs, EEPROMs, Compact Flash, and speciality analog audio, ISA/PCI -- several thousand connections in the 3.75" x 3.5" form factor.

Pretty pictures? (and I'm always on the lookout for .pcb files for my testing, if you have some tricky ones you can send me).

I've also done several 16" x 22" dense double sided 6-8 layer smt layouts with PCB that have a couple hundred thousand connections,

Wow.

The lesstif hid of PCB allows boards up to about a quarter mile per side, in case you need to go even bigger :)

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